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Thou go not, like the quarry-slave at night,  
 Scourged to his dungeon, but sustain'd and sooth'd  
 By an unfaltering trust, approach thy grave,  
 Like one who wraps the drapery of his couch  
 About him, and lies down to pleasant dreams.'

Of the shorter pieces, that to a Waterfowl is thought by some the best. It has, perhaps, conceptions of greater novelty and strength, but we can imagine nothing finer than the Inscription for the Entrance into a Wood, Green River, and the Yellow Violet. We will quote a part of the first, which many of our readers probably do not recollect.

' Whither, 'midst falling dew,  
 While glow the heavens with the last steps of day,  
 Far, through their rosy depths, dost thou pursue  
 Thy solitary way ?

' Vainly the fowler's eye  
 Might mark thy distant flight to do thee wrong,  
 As, darkly painted on the crimson sky,  
 Thy figure floats along.

' Seek'st thou the plashy brink  
 Of weedy lake, or marge of river wide,  
 Or where the rocking billows rise and sink  
 On the chafed ocean side ?

' All day thy wings have fann'd  
 At that far height, the cold thin atmosphere ;  
 Yet stoop not, weary, to the welcome land,  
 Though the dark night is near.

' And soon that toil shall end,  
 Soon shalt thou find a summer home, and rest,  
 And scream among thy fellows ; reeds shall bend  
 Soon o'er thy sheltered nest.'



ART. XIX.—*An Essay concerning the Free Agency of Man, or the Powers and Faculties of the Human Mind, the Decrees of God, Moral Obligation, Natural Law, and Morality.* Montpelier, Vt. 12mo. pp. 215. 1820.

To every reader, who carefully notices the title page of this book, it must appear surprising, that so many subjects of such extent and difficulty could all be despatched in a thin duo-

decimo volume. The author has, however, at least an unquestionable right to the praise and gratitude of his readers for his conciseness. It is not our intention to give an analysis of the book, nor to notice the opinions advanced on every subject. We shall confine our remarks to a few principal points.

The first chapter is wholly employed by the author in the definition of important terms, and in stating the principles on which his reasoning is to proceed. Both these are contrived with particular reference to the conclusions which he aims to establish. In some of the definitions, we think, there is a want of precision and correctness. *Sensation* is confounded with *perception*; *reflection* with *memory*; and *choice* with the *greatest apparent good*. Of *reasoning* the following definition is given. 'Reasoning are the several steps taken by the mind to attain a knowledge of truth.'

To say nothing of the clumsiness of this definition, it is far from being correct, for there are other means employed in the discovery of truth besides reasoning. Perception, simple comparison, definition, and chemical analysis, are methods used for the attainment of truth, neither of which can with propriety be denominated reasoning. This term has a technical and more limited meaning. It is exclusively applicable to those operations in which relations are traced by the instrumentality of proofs.

There are several other definitions to which we might object; but we pass to articles of more importance. Our author adopts the ancient division of the mind into two leading faculties or powers, which are the understanding and the will. But this classification is incomplete, for there are many states of mind, which cannot properly be ranked under either of those heads. The understanding he calls the passive power, and the will, the active power of the mind. He thinks each of these powers may act without the assistance of the other, and makes frequent mention of the passive operations of the understanding. So the will is thought to act without knowledge.

'I believe,' says he, 'the first volitions of every mind are at random. They take place before knowledge exists.—I do not apprehend that knowledge is necessary for the existence of volitions; that is, volition may exist without knowledge, as it does in the minds of infants and ideots.' p. 31.

When the understanding, will, memory, and the like, are called powers or faculties of the mind, the language must be regarded as wholly figurative. These names are applied in consequence of the different actions which the mind performs, and must not be considered as implying separate parts or instruments of the mind, as when we speak of the limbs and organs of the body. From the singleness of consciousness, it is manifest that the mind is simple and uncompounded; in every act, therefore, its whole substance must be employed, though the energy, with which it acts, be not always the same. One half the mind can no more be engaged without the other, than one half of a ball can move while the other half is at rest. But though the mind be in its nature simple, its operations are often complicated. The understanding and will reciprocally guide and assist each other. Even in the reception of ideas from external objects, as in hearing, seeing, &c. the mind is not entirely passive, as some have supposed. Without some degree of attention, which is an act of the will, no perceptions are required. The reason why the mind has been thought passive in such cases is, that we cannot ordinarily avoid the effects produced by material objects on the senses. But this does not prove that the mind is wholly passive, when thus affected; and that it is not so is manifest from this circumstance, that in proportion as our attention is called off from particular objects, the impressions we receive from them will be feeble and imperfect. We are sometimes so deeply engaged in thought, as to be unaffected by sounds, which usually attract our notice; and a sudden fright may render us for a while insensible to all surrounding objects.

The thing most insisted on in the book we are examining is the free agency of man. The author endeavors to establish this important doctrine on an immovable foundation, and in order to this he examines the principles advanced on the subject by Locke in his chapter on power, and by Edwards, in his treatise on the will. He is equally dissatisfied with the theories of both these philosophers, in respect to the successive acts of the will, the first of whom proposes '*uneasiness*,' and the other, '*the strongest motive*,' as the immediate cause of volition. It would wholly subvert human liberty, he supposes, to have the will in the slightest degree swayed by the judgment of the understanding, or by the influence of motives. This is manifest from the following expressions.

‘Liberty or freedom, is the mind beginning, regulating, continuing, and ending its volition, without any thing to act on the mind, so as therein to produce, or prevent volition; also there being nothing to hinder or impede the intended external effect of volition.’

Again.

‘The mind has an active power; but I do not consider this alone, though it is taken into the account, to be freedom; but the absence of things, that the mind may exercise its active power in beginning, regulating, continuing, and ending its volition, without compulsion or restraint.’—‘The phrase, to exercise one’s liberty, when speaking of the mind, must mean that there is nothing acting on the mind, so as therein to produce or prevent volition. If any one should inquire why the mind wills, the proper answer is, because the mind has an active power. But how do you know that it has an active power? Because I do not feel that I am acted upon, and made to will. It is absurd for any one, who believes that the mind has an active power, to inquire what makes or causes the mind to will; for if any thing makes or causes the mind to will, it has no more activity in willing, than in feeling, but must be passive in both.

‘Volitions are not effects, unless something acts on the mind, and therein produces them. But, if they are so produced, then the active power to begin action is not in the mind, but in something else, which begins the action. Before any one undertakes to decide, that volitions are effects, produced by uneasiness of desire, or by the strongest motive in the mind’s view, or by any thing else, let him seriously consider, whether the mind has an active power, by which it can begin, continue, and end volition in itself.’ p. 25.

From these extracts it is manifestly the opinion of the writer, that if the mind be active in willing, it must not, itself, be influenced by any thing extraneous. This we think an erroneous supposition; and we see no good reason why volitions may not be called effects. They have precisely the same claim to that appellation, as other things to which it is applied. Cause and effect are relative terms, and have reference only to changes, which take place. That is denominated a cause, which immediately and uniformly precedes any new appearance; and the new appearance itself is called an effect. All the material substances around us are undergoing continual alterations in their component particles; and in organized bodies sensible changes are rapidly taking place. But in all this

ceaseless variety of mutations, there is not a single instance in which we are able to discover any real efficiency, or to trace any necessary dependence of one quality, or one event on another. All our knowledge of causation resolves itself into contiguity of successive appearances. Thus a spark of fire is said to be the cause of the explosion of gunpowder : not on account of any knowledge we possess of the secret process which suddenly takes place in the minute particles of the powder, but because the contact of the spark was the event which immediately preceded the explosion. In like manner we speak of heat and cold as the causes of innumerable phenomena in bodies, merely because they are the uniform antecedents of the phenomena which occur.

The intellectual, like the material world, is subject to perpetual changes. Our present thoughts and feelings immediately give place to others, and consciousness is perpetually shifting from one subject to another. In the successive changes of the mind, as in the phenomena of material objects, we employ the terms cause and effect, to denote merely the relation of antecedence and subsequence in the order of events. The varying states of the mind are subject to the influence of general laws. It is for this reason that we are enabled to conjecture, with a good degree of certainty, how men will act in any supposable circumstances, by knowing how men have before acted under circumstances of a similar nature. In every country and in every period of the world, men have endeavored to avoid hurtful objects, and to obtain those which are agreeable. This fact can in no way be accounted for, if we deny that the volitions of men are in any degree influenced by their hopes and fears, their desires and aversions.

We are ready to go any reasonable length with our anonymous friend, in the support of human liberty ; but we cannot espouse such notions of freedom as are inconsistent with the rational character of man. Volitions, that are not produced by motives, must be wholly fortuitous and irregular. This doctrine renders both the understanding and the will useless. It can be of no service for us to know what actions will promote our happiness, unless this knowledge has some tendency to produce those actions ; and the power of willing and acting, without the guidance of reason, is the privilege of wandering about in total darkness. The doctrine in question is

opposed to the common sense of mankind. Ask any person, young or old, learned or ignorant, why he performed a particular action, and he will name some reason or motive as the true cause, without which the action would not have been performed. Without the causal influence of motives on volitions, there would be no consistency in the conduct of men, no accountableness for actions, no justice in rewards and punishments.

However plausible the doctrine we are examining may be made to appear in theory, it has not yet been attempted in practice. Its stoutest advocates, we are persuaded, would act like the rest of mankind in the common business of life. The only difference between them and others would be in the explanation they would give of their conduct, and this must make them ridiculous. Let us suppose a person, fully impressed with this theory, to be called to an act of benevolence. He sees a fellow-being struggling in the waves, and sinking to inevitable death. He plunges into the flood, and, by a successful effort, rescues the unhappy sufferer from his fate. The relieved person, on recovering strength, pours out his soul in gratitude to his benefactor, who replies to him, in the spirit of his philosophy, ‘I have no claims to these expressions of thankfulness, and you owe me nothing for the assistance I have rendered you. If actions are prompted by volitions, volitions themselves are not effects resulting from motives, or any previous circumstances. Be assured that in this, as in all other cases, my mind has been *free*; and that I have not been influenced, in the slightest degree, by any sympathy for your sufferings, or concern for your welfare.’

We are not able to discern the difference which our author finds between the acts of choosing and willing. In the latter, he says, the mind is entirely active, and in the former wholly passive. But we contend that a volition is required in every act of choice. We cannot, it is granted, cause such qualities to exist in objects, as we wish them to possess. We are under the necessity of seeing them as they are. When, therefore, several things are presented to us at the same time, some will appear more pleasing than others, and we are naturally led to fix on that which is the most pleasing. But the choice is usually made with caution. The mind compares and deliberates, and the balancing is at last terminated by a decree of the will. The following illustration is given us by our author.

‘A man may choose or prefer the doing of an action proposed, and at the same time not will to do it. Suppose walking is proposed. Now walking may be more pleasing or agreeable to one’s mind, than not to walk ; therefore, as soon as it is proposed, he may prefer or choose to walk ; and at the same time, he may sit still, because he does not will to walk. The choice or preference to walk may *necessarily* exist in the understanding, when the mind has compared walking with not walking ; but the necessity of choice does not make volition, which is an act of the will, necessary. The mind may *freely* will not to walk, although it is under a *physical necessity* to choose to walk. In this way necessity and freedom can exist together ; and in this way, a man may be bound and free at the same time.’ p. 52.

What is the reason, we would ask, why the man, in the case here stated, does not will to walk ? The most natural answer seems to be, because he does not choose it. Walking is a complicated act, consisting of a series of muscular exertions in the limbs ; and to each of these a separate volition is necessary, which is manifest from the care practised at each step in walking, not to pitch the foot into water or filth, nor against any obstacle that might lie in the way. When, therefore, the man, in the above example, chooses the act of walking, he must be supposed to choose the whole of a connected series of efforts, and, at the same time, not to choose the first, on which all the rest depend. Or, in other words, since every act of choosing requires a volition, he must will to walk and not to walk at the same time.

This doctrine, that volitions are not caused by any thing acting on the mind, has long since been advanced by some advocates for liberty, though in a little different form. They have contended for an *indifferency* in the mind, remaining till the acts of the will are past. But this notion appears to be wild and paradoxical. It is hardly possible to conceive, that the mind should remain in a state of indifference, that is, of neutrality, suspense, or equipoise, with regard to acting or not acting, in a case it has fully examined, and in which it has found strong reasons to determine its judgment.

While we reject these extravagant notions of liberty, we would not be thought to go to the opposite extreme, and to admit all the dogmas and theories, which have been advanced by the champions of necessity. In admitting that volitions may be called effects, resulting from previous states of mind, we



do not assert, that all human volitions are necessary. There is a manifest difference between a real and a necessary cause. That may be denominated the real cause of a particular volition, which did in fact excite it, and without which it would not have taken place. But at the same time, it may not have been a necessary cause, and such as would be always followed by the same effect. We disclaim that doctrine, which annihilates all human freedom and power, and admits a universal fatality in the actions of men. The mind if willing is not moved by the same principle as a balance, to which it has often been compared. Moral causes do not operate with the same undeviating uniformity, as physical. The minds of men are differently affected by the same objects. It is only in those cases, where the reasons for acting are clear, and the motive urgent, that we can trace a uniformity in the conduct of men. No person would hesitate to move from his place in order to save himself from being crushed by a falling tree or building. In such extreme cases, all people would act alike. But where the reasons, which determine the choice of actions, are slight and feeble, different persons will take different courses, and the same person act differently, at different times. In those cases, which moral writers have called indifferent, that is, where outward circumstances present no distinct grounds for determining the choice, volitions appear to be produced by an arbitrary power of the mind. We experience no difficulty in directing our actions in these cases, and it is in these, that our freedom appears the most perfect. It is not pretended that the mind ever exerts a self-determining power in opposition to motives; but we are sometimes called to make an election in things of precisely the same value; as, in choosing one of two guineas, equally bright, pure, and heavy. The motive for making the choice is the worth of the coin offered; but as the two presented to our option are regarded as of equal value, and may be obtained with equal ease, we can have no motive for taking one in preference to the other. In selecting the objects to be pursued, and in all the more important decisions of the will, we are influenced by special reasons for each separate act; but this is not the case in all the subordinate acts of the will, as in determining the exact order and manner in which a number of unconnected actions shall be performed, for the attainment of an end proposed. The object is not lost, because different means may be employed with equal advan-

tage in procuring it. Unless the mind had power to act in these minute affairs, without being impelled in each instance by a superior motive, the ordinary business of life could not be performed.

From the foregoing remarks it will appear, how far we consider the doctrine of our author, formerly stated, correct, viz. that the mind in willing is not influenced by any causes *ab extra*. For the truth of what we have said on this subject, every one must judge for himself, by carefully watching the operations of his own mind. This is the only tribunal to which an appeal can be made. The moral freedom of man is not a question of speculation, to be settled by abstract reasoning. It is a question of fact to be decided by feeling. It is on this ground, that we admit the doctrine as true. We believe we are free, because we feel that we are so. We have the same evidence of our freedom, that we have of our accountableness, our merit or demerit. It is an original principle of our constitution, for which we have the clear and intuitive evidence of consciousness.

Having detained our readers longer than we intended, on this first article of human liberty, we will not further fatigue them by any particular remarks on the subjects that follow. The author examines with attention and ability the sentiments of Doctors Edwards, Dwight, Hopkins, and others, on several controverted subjects of morals and theology. We agree with him in most of his criticisms on these authors, though some of them are minute and merely verbal. We are gratified with the candor and deference with which he examines their doctrines, evincing thereby, that, while he differs from them in sentiment, he has a deep respect for their characters.

The author of the little volume we have been examining, has seen fit to conceal his name from the public, though for what reason we cannot tell. There appears to be nothing in the character of the book, which need make its author very solicitous on this point, one way or the other. There are no swelling pretensions to uncommon powers, or extensive erudition. The style of the book is by no means elevated, nor even in all places correct. We should judge, that the writer had been more conversant with books of speculation and controversy, than with works of taste. His mind seems to be naturally formed for dry and abstruse investigations; and in many places he gives evidence of mental strength and discrimina-

tion. We are not pleased with the manner, in which he commences his work. He attempts to enumerate and define the various powers and operations of the mind. There is something very imposing in this method, and which must naturally lead inexperienced readers into error. They would be led to view the mind, not as an uncompounded substance, but as an assemblage of various parts, to which separate functions were allotted, and which had not an inseparable connexion with each other. Many writers on pneumatology have committed the same fault, and some have displayed their ingenuity in multiplying the number of original principles belonging to the mind. All such attempts are worse than useless. Instead of advancing mental philosophy, they serve rather to retard its progress, by introducing into it darkness and confusion.

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ART. XX.—*Valerius, a Roman Story.* 3 vols. Edinburgh, 1821.

THIS novel confirms us in fears, which we have long entertained. While the author of *Waverly* confined himself to scenes of Scottish history, those who were subjected by him to the task of reading a tale in four volumes, every six months; who held their literary reputation, not to say their access to good company on the tenure of buying and perusing as fast as he could write, and Mr Constable could print,—consolated themselves with the idea, that the range of Scottish history would be soon exhausted. They had even the distinct assurance of this most remarkable author himself, that when they had despatched his three first works, in which the delineation of Scottish manners was intended to be brought down to the commencement of this century; they should be released from the domination of his spell, and allowed to plod on in the old routine of their professional authors. A general persuasion was cherished, that this interruption of the order of things was but temporary, and that the finest talents and rarest accomplishments of the age were not permanently to be consecrated to novel writing. The publication of *Kenilworth* finally dissipated this delusion, by transferring to pure English ground, English history, and English manners the same charm, which was supposed to be peculiar to associations with the other side of the Tweed; a charm so potent as to extend to the dialogues in broad lowland Scottish, which we, in imitation of the good